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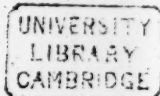
LECTISSIMÆ EFUS CONJUGI

MARGARETÆ,

ANTONIUS SCATTERGOOD

HANC OPELLAM

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TESTIMONY OF THE COMMISSIONER

ANTHONY SCATTERGOOD

WITNESSES

2

ÆTHRO's  
C H A R A C T E R  
O F  
Worthy Judges.

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A N  d  
Affise-Sermon

P R E A C H E D A T  
N O R T H A M P T O N

M A R C H 22. 1663.

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By *Antonie Scattergood* D.D.

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## JETHRO'S Character of Worthy JUDGES.

EXOD. 18.21.

—able men, such as fear God, men of truth,  
hating covetousness.

**I**N this Chapter is set down how it came to pass, that Moses, who hitherto had born the burthen of six hundred thousand men himself alone, hearing, examining, and deciding even their lesser causes, was perswaded, for his own ease, and the benefit of all Israel, to make choice of some worthy persons to be his *helps in government*, and to give commission and charge unto them to *judge the people at all seasons*. It <sup>v. 22.</sup> was the counsel of Jethro that put him upon this course of erecting and constituting as it were a new polity. For he being come out of Midian to con- <sup>v. 1-6.</sup>gratulate the Israelites deliverance out of Egypt, and to give his Son-in-law a visit in the wilderness, and observing the pains he took in judging and

B

deter-

VER. 13.

determining of controversies *from morning till evening*, like a prudent and experienced Prince, and like a faithful friend, he blameth him for it, as being a burthen too heavy for the shoulders of any single person, and adviseth him to select and ordain Judges and inferiour Magistrates, who would greatly lessen the trouble he underwent, by bearing each of them his share of it. Sage counsel this! But what need had Moses that Jethro should give it him? He having the Divine Oracle to consult upon all occasions, and God vouchsafing so to honour and befriend him as to *speak with him mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches*, one would think it had been altogether superfluous for this *King in Fesurun* to receive instructions from *the Priest or Prince of Midian* how to manage his Office, how to rule God's people. But thus it pleased God to exercise and encrease the humility and meekness of his servant by putting him to learn prudence and policy from one who was in many respects his inferiour.

Numb. 12 8.

Deut. 33. 5.  
Exo. 18. 1.

Acts 9, &amp; 22.

Acts 10.

Thus the great Doctour of the Gentiles was by Christ's own appointment, who appeared unto him, sent into Damascus, that there Ananias might cure him as well of his spiritual as of his bodily blindness, that from him he might hear the first lessons of Christianity, and know what he was to do and to suffer for Christ's sake. And the Angel's business with Cornelius was, not to preach the Gospel to him, but to give him directions to find and send for Simon Peter, whose office it was to do it. Thus it is the good pleasure of

of God now, that we should all ordinarily be taught our duty, not by a messenger from the dead, nor by an Angel from heaven, nor by God's immediate voice or revelation, but by men like ourselves. The precious *treasure* of knowledge is conveyed unto us through *earthen vessels*: And it is our duty to be content, yea glad, thus to receive it; to look upon Truth, whoever speaketh it, as a ray of Divine light, and to embrace wholesome counsel from the mouth of the meanest. And there is none indeed so mean and simple but the greatest and wisest upon earth may haply one time or other learn something from him. The Wisdom and Bounty of Heaven hath so disposed things below, so dispensed the blessings we enjoy, that no man hath all, and that every one hath some; none is absolute and perfect, none quite empty and deficient; and this, to the end that both the sense of our wants may keep us humble, and the mutual dependency that there is amongst us may make us love and not contemn one another; that *the Head may not say to the Feet, I Cor. 12. 21. have no need of you.*

This lesson meek Moses here had well learnt; and he may teach us all by his example. He was questionless the wisest and most excellent person then in the world: He had been bred up in Pharaoh's Court, and so became *learned in all the* Acts 7. 22. *wisdom of the Egyptians*: He was mighty in words and deeds; he bore in his hand a rod far more potent then any sceptre, by which he darkened the air, dried the sea, broched the rocks, ruled the creature at his pleasure: He was the

Deut. 34. 5.  
Exod. 33. 11.

Exod. 18. 17, 18.

Guide and Judge of a mighty nation, the then only visible Church of God: And (which was his greatest dignity) he was *the Servant of the Lord*, and familiarly conversed with him as one friend doth with another. Yet this mighty and worthy Personage patiently heareth himself taxed for seeming to be ignorant of that which almost every body knoweth by common experience, That overmuch pains will assuredly wear and waste the pains-taker; and to be plainly told he did not well in taking upon him the sole administration of justice to so vast a multitude, and that both himself and the people under his charge and conduct would forely rue it if he did not assume some able and well-qualified persons to be his assistants in that weighty affair. This he heareth quietly from one who was *a stranger from the Commonwealth of Israel*, and whom some hold to have been an idolater and ignorant of the true God: But this is too harsh a censure, and very improbable, as appeareth both from many passages in this Chapter, and from Moses's so long living with him, and at length marrying of his daughter. Whatever Jethro was, Moses meekly gave him the hearing, and neither justified himself, nor blamed his reprover for seeming too curious and busie *in aliena republica*, and meddling with that which nothing concerned him; But, instead of that, he *hearkned to the voice of his Father-in-law*, and did all that he had said, as ye read ver. 24. and may see further in the end of this Chapter, and in the first of Deuteronomie.

Let us all, Beloved, of what degree or calling soever,



foever, imitate this great Mirrour of meekness, and be willing to be told of the errour of our ways, and of the way how to amend them, though it be by the meanest of God's messengers. Hitherto ye have had only a Preface to the Text; but, if ye please, let it serve for a Preface to the Sermon also.

In the words I have made choice to treat of at this time, are contained certain Characters or Notes which Jethro held requisite to be in those whom Moses should employ in Courts of Judicature, and make Ministers of justice under him: They must be *able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness*. In the handling of which points there is no better method then to take the words as they lie in order.

**I. ABLE MEN.** There is a threefold Ability requisite in Magistrates. They should have 1. *able Heads*, 2. *able Hearts*, 3. *able Hands*. They ought to be 1. *men of Wisdom and Discretion*, 2. *men of Courage and Activity*, 3. *men of Power and good Estate*.

1. *Wisdom*, saith the Wise-man, *is the principal thing*. Therefore he exhorteth us *to get wisdom, and with all our getting to get understanding*. Whatever our profession or employment be, *wisdom is profitable to direct*. This will teach us to follow our callings and to order all our affairs with discretion. *Through this is the house builded*, and furnished too, Prov. 24.3,4. This instructeth the plowman to sow and order his corn, Isa. 28. And this teacheth the artificer how to handle his tools. In this book of Exodus they are often said to have been

## JETHRO'S Character

been *wise-hearted* and *filled with wisdom* that wrought about the Tabernacle. And if those lower trades cannot be rightly menaged without Wisdom, how necessary an ornament and accomplishment will it be to those whose *art* it is, as the Prince of Poets speaketh,

— *regere imperio populos,* —

— *paciq imponere mores,*

*Parcere subjectis, & debellare superbos,*

to maintain Justice and Peace amongst the people, to protect the innocent, and to suppress the oppressour! Certainly Wisdom is needful either here, or nowhere. The word KING, which in our language signifieth the supreme Magistrate, is derived, they say, from *cyning*, which in the Saxon tongue signifieth *Cunning*, *Skill*, *Knowledge*; Wherein Kings especially should abound. This will be unto them an ornament *better then rubies*, and a defence *better then strength or then weapons of war*. It was therefore one of the wisest acts that we find recorded of the wisest of Kings, that being put to his choice what he would receive of the Giver of every good and perfect gift, he said, *Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad*, 1 King. 3. 9. But because, as Jethro telleth Moses, the administering of justice to a whole nation is a task too heavy for any one man to perform himself alone, (*Who is able to judge, saith Solomon there, this thy so great a people?*) therefore it is an especial point of Kingly prudence to substitute, as Moses is here advised, well-qualified and worthy Persons to discharge that office under him.

And,

*Virg. Æn. 6. 351.*

PROV. 8. 11.  
Ecc. 7. 11. & 9.  
16, 18.

And, blessed be God, our Moses, who hath been wonderfully hid (by the care of females too) and graciously preserved from bloud-thirsty Tyrant, who hath escaped (as Moses did) perils by water and perils by land, and who hath been brought out of exile (as Moses out of Midian) to rule and govern this our Israel; This our Moses, I say, hath shewn his Princely wisdom and care over his people in *providing able men to judge them at all seasons*; Men well versed in the Law of God, men well learned in the Laws of the Land, men of mature age and deep experience; who have fresh in their memories the Reports of ancient Sages, *responsa prudentum, & sententias judicum*; who having been acquainted with trials of all sorts, know how to receive informations, examin witnesses, sift out the truth, put a quick end to suits without unnecessary demurrers and protractions; who can pluck off the fair disguise that is sometimes put upon a foul cause, lay open the fallshood of subtile and cunning men, and so defeat the crafty and clear the innocent; who have the Balance of Justice in one hand as well as the Sword in the other, and having exactly weighed what is brought before them, can tell when to use the rigour of the Law, and when mitigation and equity should be exercised.

Such *able men* are the reverend Judges of this land. Such, I am sure, all Judges ought to be; And not only they, but also all others proportionally who have any thing to do in Courts of Justice, all that be Assessours on the Bench, or Pleaders at the Bar, or empannelled for the Jury; they should be all *able men* in this first sense, men of good skill and  
judge-



judgment in such matters as they take in hand, men of wit and dexterity to expedite and dispatch them. Then they may be able to promote justice: But otherwise they cannot but be perverters or hinderers of it. For none can be competent judges of what they understand not. *Ἐκαστος κρίνει καλῶς ὃ γινώσκει*, saith the Philosopher. Knowledge is a necessary help to Judgment. They must be *able men* that judge.

Art. Eth. I.

2 Sam. 15. 4.

Prov. 23. 5.

1 Sa. 5. 20.

cr. 23.

To blame then are they who having empty heads, but ambitious or covetous hearts, say with Absalom, *Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice.* They would have the credit and profit of the place, but are void both of care and ability to discharge it. Vain men! that gape after Honour, which is but a bubble, and catch at Riches, which are *nothing*, and consider not what a fearful Wo would hang over their heads if they had their wish, namely that in the Prophet, *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* A gross mistake. But thus undoubtedly would these men mistake, if once set in the seat of judgment, being destitute of the main qualification of a Judge, the spirit of judgment and discerning. They would *justifie the wicked, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.*

Beloved, the right way to Honour is Virtue: And it is better far to deserve preferment, and yet not have it, then to have it, and not deserve it. Labour then for real worth, and wait for reward

till

till he who is the fountain of honour shall think fit to bestow it. To do otherwise, to look for advancement and advantages without desert, is as absurd and preposterous as if a man should expect to reap when he hath not sown, to receive wages without doing his work, and to see a shadow where there is neither light nor substance. So much of the first sort of Ability that is requisite in Magistrates; They must have *able* Heads. Next, they must have

2. *Able* Hearts, that is, Hearts full of courage and resolution to do what they know is their duty. A good Second this unto the former. Skill without Will, Wisdom in the brain without Freedom in the breast, is altogether unactive and to no purpose, like a good weapon that is never drawn out, but still resteth and rusteth in its scabbard; or, like a man who, having a journey to go, hath eyes to see his way, but no legs to walk in it. On the other side, Courage not guided by Knowledge is like metall in a blind horse, carrying him on apace toward blocks or downfalls; or, like a sharp sword in the hand of a fool or a mad-man, wounding whom it should not. But *si non prosunt singula juncta juvant*. These two, a good Head, and a great Heart, though when apart one from the other they avail little or nothing, yea are often dangerous and hurtful both to others and to them that have them, yet when they go together in a Magistrate, they serve to make him almost complete: Like Castor and Pollux, who appearing single were counted of old sad *omens*, portending ill luck to mariners, but when they were seen both at once,

C

*simul*

*simul & semel*, they signified a successful voyage.

Beloved, the vessel wherein we are all embarked, the great Ship of this Kingdom, is likely to sail on prosperously, so long as we see upon our sails or masts those lucky *Gemini*, those twin-stars, the light of Knowledge, and the fire of Zele; so long as those who sit at the helm, and see to the steerage of our course, are both skilful in their Compass, and careful to observe it. Let us therefore pray often to Him that *sitteth upon the water-floud*, that as our Land is full of Knowledge, as the waters cover the sea, so *Judgment* may run down in it as waters, and *Righteousness* like a mighty stream; And to this end, that he would bless all those whose office it is to execute justice amongst us, especially the reverend and learned Judges; that as he hath given unto them *the spirit of Counsel*, so he would also give unto them *the spirit of Might*, that they may still be strong and of good courage, that they may not dread, nor be dismayed, but deal courageously; that they may not respect the persons, or letters, or promises, nor fear the faces, or frowns, or threats of men, but with an undaunted courage do justice to all unpartially, maintaining the cause of the innocent, though never so poor, and *breaking the jaws of the oppressour, and plucking the spoil out of his teeth*, though he be never so great.

Thus doing they will do God, their Prince, their Country, yea and themselves also, good service. By obeying the will and imitating the example of that *Judge of all the earth, who sitteth in the throne judging right*, they will deserve those high titles, that are given them Psal. 82. 6. *I have said, Ye are Gods,*

Psal 29. 10.  
Isa. 11. 9  
Ain. 5. 24.

Isa 11. 2.  
1 Chr. 22. 13.

2 Chr. 19. 11.

Jeb 29. 17.

Gen 18. 25.  
Psal. 94.

*Gods, and all of you are Children of the most High.* Their Tribunals will prove stays and props unto the King's Throne, which is *established by righteousness*. They will uphold the Commonwealth from confusion and ruine, and procure the blessings of God upon it. They will have the prayers and praises of good people here, and receive from *the righteous Judge the crown of righteousness* here-  
after. Prov. 16. 13. 2 Tim 4. 8.

But those who, being called to the office and dignity of a Judge, suffer base unworthy fear to bear sway in them, and dare not go on, as they ought, in the course of justice by reason of some *lion* they phansie to lie *in their way*; Those who had rather wrong a poor innocent, then by doing him right forfeit the favour and incur the displeasure of some great man; Those who, with *Gallio*, out of negligence or love of ease *care for none of those things* which by vertue of their place they are bound to care for; or, with *Festus*, to do the multitude a *pleasure*, can find in their hearts to leave a righteous man *bound*; or, with *Pilate*, to avoid Cesar's frown and the loss of their place, can dispense with their conscience for once, and doom a most innocent person to death; Such Judges as these disgrace themselves and their honourable calling by their faint-heartedness; and by using unlawful means to save their own stake and to gain the favour of mortal men, they *fall into the hands of the living God*, who is a *consuming fire*. Prov. 26. 13. Acts 18. 17. Acts 24. 27. John 19. 13, &c. Hebr. 10. 31. & 12. 29.

Beloved, let us all, both Magistrates and people, banish pusillanimous fear out of our bosoms. No passion so much disquieteth our minds, none so



Wisd. 17. 12.

Job 36. 21.

Rom. 12. 11.

Jer. 48. 10.

Matth. 25. 21, 23.

much opposeth Reason and Religion, as this. *It betrayeth the succours which Reason offereth*: It maketh a man *chuse iniquity rather than affliction*, prefer a whole skin before a sound conscience, *trust God with his soul rather than men with his estate*, as was lately said and practiced by too many. In a word, he that is basely fearful and cowardly is so far from being a good Magistrate that he cannot be a good man till that aguish distemper be well driven out of him. Out with it then in God's name; and let us all in this sense become *able men*, men of courage and action, *not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord* with all our might in the performance of those duties that either our general or our particular calling obligeth us unto, that so we may escape the *curse* that is threatned against those that *do the work of the Lord negligently*, and be commended and rewarded with *good and faithful servants* at our Master's coming. I come to the last kind of Ability that should be in Judges. They must not only have *able Heads*, and *able Hearts*, but

3. *Able Hands*. I mean, They must be *able* in outward matters. The word in the Original, besides that Ability of mind ye have heard of, signifieth many other things; as 1. *Ability of body*, 2. *a Multitude of people*, 3. *Power and Authority*, 4. *Riches and Estate*; All of them fit accoustrements of a Judge. Of the three first but a little, and of the fourth not much.

First, Judges have need of *able Bodies*. Otherwise, how can they endure to sit day after day *from morning till evening* (as Moses did) in Courts of judicature,

Exod 18. 13, 14.

judicature, carefully and heedfully attending every transaction? Otherwise, how can they twice a year ride long *circuits* (as Samuel did) and *judge* the people *in several places*? Otherwise, how can they, when they are returned to their houses, take so great pains as they do in their Studies, that by encreasing their knowledge they may encrease their judgment, and by learning from the dead may be the better furnished to instruct the living? This last is not the least of their labours, *much reading*, as well as much riding, *being a weariness to the flesh*. 1 Sam. 7. 16. Eccl. 12. 12.

Secondly, the word signifieth a *Multitude*, or *great Assembly*. And this it is meet, more then meet, that my Lords the Judges, when they are upon the King's and Countrey's service, should still see about them; that not onely the Sheriff with his train, and the Justices and other Gentlemen, but also a good part of the body of the Countrey should attend at the Assise, to the end they may honour the persons of the Judges, credit and countenance the proceedings in the Courts, and being present when Oppressours and Malefactours are justly sentenced, may *hear and fear*, and learn *not to do presumptuously*.

Thirdly, the word signifieth *Power and Authority*. And this ought all Judges to be invested withall. Otherwise their Wisdom and Zele will avail but little for the publick good.

— *Vana est sine viribus ira.*

How sharp soever the edge of a weapon be, yet if it have no back, it will flag, and give feeble and uncertain strokes. So if a Judge want power, though he say what he ought, the people will do what they list,

Eccl. 8. 4.

list, and dispute and despise his sentence at pleasure. To prevent this, all Magistrates ought to be armed and backed by their Master who employeth them. And so our Judges are. They are *Iustitii Domini Regis*, my Lord the King's Justifiers: And *where the word of a King is, there is power*. They are authorized by his Commission who, under God, hath the supreme power in the Nation; and they are assisted by him who, under the King, hath the *Posse Comitatus*, the supreme power in the County; whose office it is to see that done which the Judge hath said, and his words turned into works.

In locum.

Fourthly, the word signifieth *Wealth and great Estate*. And this Grotius seemeth to conceive to be principally, if not onely, meant here. — m (saith he) *opulentos significat*. And he giveth two reasons why none but rich and wealthy persons should be chosen Judges; *Tales enim & dignitatem tuentur melius, & longius absunt ab inhonesti questus suspitione*; Such as have large and fair estates both are better able to maintain the dignity of that high calling, and shall also be freer from the suspicion of corruption and dishonest gain, whereas those who are known to be in a poor and needy condition will still be supposed ready to embrace any offer, how unlawful soever, that they may provide for their necessities, and get a livelyhood. We may adde a third; That such is the judgment, or rather want of judgment, of the common people, that wisdom and real worth will come short of its due esteem amongst them, if it be overclouded with poverty:



— *credidit ingens*

*Horat. l. 2. sat. 3.*

*Pauperiem vitium* —

On the contrary,

— *qui divitias construxerit, ille*

*clarus erit, fortis, justus, sapiens.* —

Poverty they account the greatest vice, and no goods like to those of Fortune. A fond and foolish conceit this. As we should *not have the faith of* Jam 2. 1.  
*our Lord Jesus Christ*, so neither ought we to have the Law of the Land, *with respect of persons*. There was not a jote more reverence and obedience due to the decrees of the Roman Senat when the Court shone with purple then there was when there sate there

— *pelliti rustica corda patres.*

*Propert. l. 4. el. 1.*

Senatours taken from the sheepfolds, and clad with no better robes then the skins of their cattel. Truth is Truth, and Law is Law, though a poor man speak it; and wisdom is wisdom, though it lie under sordid raiment: Yet since the Vulgar will not be brought to think so, but *the gay clothing* and Jam. 1. 2, 3.  
*the gold-ring* shall still find *respect* from them, and *the poor man's wisdom* be despised, and his words *not* Eccel. 9. 16.  
*heard*, it will be prudence therefore in the supreme Magistrate, when *Governours* are to be *sent by him* 1 Pet 2. 14.  
*for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well*, to observe Jethro's advice here to Moses, and to pitch upon such as, *ceteris paribus*; are the *ablest men* in this last sense, men of great and plentiful estates, were it for no other reason but this, that by thus indulging to that popular prejudice, which he cannot cure, he may keep Tribunals from the disrespect and contempt they

they would be liable unto if men of mean fortunes were set upon them.

1 Tim. 5 17.

1 Kings 12. 31.

I might here take occasion to speak also of men of another robe, the Pastours of Christ's flock, the Ministers of the Gospel, who being *Rulers* too in their proper sphere, besides their inward abilities, ought also to be *able men* of estates, and that, amongst other reasons, upon the like account with Magistrates, that their *ruling* and their *labouring in the word and doctrine*, their pains and preaching, may be of more both esteem and efficacy. The Apostle would have them *accounted worthy of double honour*, of Maintenance, and of Reverence: But we have many amongst us, not of the populacy onely, but (more shame for them) even of higher rank, who look askint at the Minister's portion, and could like it far better if God were served as Jeroboam's Calves were, by *the meanest of the people*. Let such men know (to say nothing else) that they are enemies herein not so much to the Minister as to God's glory and to their own souls. For if Sacrilege, as it hath begun, once bring Poverty upon the Clergy, that Poverty will straight usher-in Contempt and Scorn; and then the Word of God, not being received with reverence, will be ineffectual; and so a wide breach and floudgate will be opened for Heresie, Irreligion, Atheism, and all Profaneness. No more of this, though the argument be too necessary, because it is not so seasonable. I will keep within the compass of the Text, that I may not exceed that of the Time. It followeth,

II. SUCH AS FEAR GOD. It is a large field  
this

this to be surveyed as it ought ; but that neither the remainder of my sand nor your weighty occasions will permit. I will therefore present you only with a small draught, and leave it to be enlarged by your private meditations.

By the *Fear of God* in this place (as we may gather from the companions which go along with it, *Love of Truth*, and *Hatred of Covetousness*) we are to understand that genuine and kindly sort of Fear which is in the hearts of God's children, and which maketh them so solicitously careful not to offend him ; an awful Reverence of the Divine Majesty, proceeding from Love of him, and producing Obedience to him ; Much like unto that respect which vertuous Wives bear unto their Husbands, or that which dutiful Children bear unto their Parents : Whence it is called *Chast* and *Filial* Fear.

There is also another sort of Fear, of a far different & baser allay, like unto that dread whereby an ill-conditioned servant is forced to do his master's will much against his own, *ἐκὼν, ἀκούσι γε θυμῷ*. Do it he would not, if he durst do otherwise. This by Divines is called *servile* or *slavish* Fear, by the Apostle *the spirit of bondage* ; because it putteth Rom. 8. 15. a man into the posture of a bonds slave, who hath his mind still tormented with the apprehension of his master's strictness and austerity, and doth all he doth to escape the whip and the cudgel. This Fear hath for its object, not Sinne, but Punishment ; and for its cause, not Love of God, as the former, but Self-love, and Love of the world, which make a man seek onely after ease, pleasure, profit, and whatsoever else the Flesh lusteth after. As for  
D God,

1 John 4. 18.

Ennius apud Cic.  
Off. 2.

Rom. 1. 30.

Ps. 94 7.

Ps. 10. 4, 11, 13

Acts 24. 25.

Ephes 2 8.

God, the man who is possessed onely with this Fear, looking upon him, not as a gracious Father, but as a stern Judge, not as a Friend, but as an Enemy, cannot choose but hate him. For as *perfect Love*, according to S. John, *casteth-out Fear*, that is, tormenting Fear; so also slavish and tormenting Fear excludeth Love. These two are incompatible and cannot stand together. *Quem metunt, oderunt : quem quisq; odit, perisse expetit.* Ungodly wretches are *μισοῦντες*, *haters of God*, and would therefore, if it were possible, pluck him out of his throne; They could wish there were no God, or that he could *not see*, or would *not regard* when they do amiss. They do what they can to put *God out of all their thoughts*, that they may sin the more licentiously. But when they shall have done all they can, God will not be quite put out of their thoughts, but ever and anon the belief of his Presence, Knowledge, Justice, Power shall im-bitter their sinful pleasures, check them in their inordinate courses, and make them *tremble*, with *Felix*, at the thought of a *judgment to come*. For as true saving *Faith* is not in the power of man, but a supernatural *gift of God*, so neither is Incredulity wholly in man's power, the knowledge and belief of some points being as it were inbred by Nature, and common unto all, especially of the Divine Essence and Attributes, That *God is*, and, That he is *wise*, and *just*, and *powerful*, and, That *he will reward every man according to his works*. Hence that propension, even in the most savage and barbarous nations, to some religion and the worship of a Deity; hence those gripes of conscience after  
*wilful*

wilful sinning, and that fearful looking-for of judgment, a notable instance whereof we have in the first sinners Gen. 3. These *terrors of the Lord*, being kindled in the breasts of men by the light of Nature, may indeed be much encreased by the preaching of the Word making clearer and further discoveries unto them of their own sins and of the wrath of God; but they cannot by any means be quite extinguished. For let wicked men endeavour never so much to blind their own eyes, to harden their hearts, and to benumme their consciences, yet still there will be *Σέδες ἐνδον*, a conscience accusing, an heart condemning, a worm gnawing, and a fire glowing:

Heb. 10. 26, 27.

— *tacitâ sudant præcordia culpâ,*

Juven. 1. 167.

saith the Satyrist: and in another place most excellently,

— *diri conscia facti*

Juven. 12. 193.

*Mens habet attonitos, & surdo verberare cedit,*

*Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum.*

A kind of hell, this, upon earth, and the greatest of all torments,

*Nocte dièq; suum gestare in pectore testem,*

---- 198.

to have the Conscience continually lashing us with the remembrance of sin and with the fear of vengeance.

This slavish and tormenting Fear, though it be in evil men and hypocrites, yet is not evil in itself, but of great use and benefit. For 1. seeing that not onely Nature teacheth us to fear the evil of punishment, but the Scripture also biddeth us, *if we do evil, then to fear*, if we should do evil and not fear, we should make our sin exceeding sinful by

Rom. 13. 4.



## JETHRO'S Character

Hab. 1. 14.

Acts 1. 37, 38.

1 King. 19. 11, 12.

Gal. 3. 24.

falling into it presumptuously, and lying in it securely. 2. Again, were it not for this curb, men would run into all licentiousness like unbridled horses; they would make their Will and their Power the onely measure of their actions, and hold nothing unlawful but what is impossible: There would be no order nor quiet upon earth, but Mankind would become *like fishes of the sea*; the greater still would devour the lesser, and all outrages and villanies would be daily committed. But God putteth this fear into the hearts of men, that it may be a restraining grace, and hinder the perpetrating of a world of wickedness. 3. Further yet, this servile Fear is an instrument not onely of God's Wisdom and Providence in ruling the affairs of the world, but also oftentimes of his fatherly Mercy and loving Kindness to his children, whom he is wont to lead towards heaven by the gates of hell, and after he hath affrighted and afflicted them by *the Spirit of Bondage*, to comfort and conduct them by *the Spirit of Adoption*; This Fear, though not itself a sanctifying and saving grace, yet making way for such; as Fire, though it giveth not forms to metalls, yet fitteth them for the reception of forms; and the Needle, though it sew not the cloth itself, yet draweth after it the threed, that doth: This we may see in those early Converts Acts 2. in whom *Compunction of heart* was the beginning of Conversion. God appeareth to our souls for the most part as he did to Elijah on mount Horeb, making the *Wind*, the *Earthquake*, and the *Fire* usher-in the *still small Voice*. Moses is our *School-master* to bring us *into Christ*, and under the

the terrours of the Law we are trained up to *serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*. First Hebr. 12. 28. we learn to dread God as a Judge; and then, to reverence him as a Father: first, to fear the Lord and his wrath; and then, to *fear the Lord and his goodness*, as the Prophet speaketh, and, as the Psalmist, to *fear him* because *there is mercy and forgiveness* with that is, (for such sense thole places may have) lest we should forfeit and come short of his goodness and mercy. First we fear lest he should find us; and then we fear lest we should lose him: first we fear lest he should smite us; and then we fear lest he should not embrace us. Thus even this Servile Fear may be said to be *the beginning of wisdom*.

But David and Solomon his son (who both give Psal. 111. 10. Pr. 1. 7. & 9. 10. that high *elogium* to the *Fear of the Lord*) are to be understood to speak of that eminent and excellent Fear which doth not contract the heart, but *enlarge* Isa. 60. 5. it, as the Prophet speaketh, doth not drive us from God, but make us cleave unto him. This Fear is not barely *the beginning of wisdom*, that is, the first step unto it, but it is (as the Hebrew word ראשית also signifieth) *the head*, the chief and principal point, of *wisdom*, the summe and complement and perfection of it. *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom*, saith God, Job 28. 28. *wisdom* κατ' ἐξοχην, eminently, emphatically so. It is often put for the whole worship and service of God, being the main root and foundation of Religion. The Preacher saith it is *the whole duty of man*, Eccl. 12. 13. *Let us hear*, saith he, *the conclusion of the whole matter*; *Fear God, and keep his com-*  
*mand-*



*mandments: for this is the whole duty of man.* Filial Fear, and sincere Obedience, that the fountain, this the stream, is both *totum Codicis*, and *totum Hominis*, the summe of God's book, and the summe of Man's duty, all that can be said, all that ought to be done. *Eschew evil, and do good*, is the Brief of the Bible. Now this Fear maketh a man not onely *to depart from evil*, (which the other Fear may do) but *to hate evil*, and that not so much because it is deadly as because it is ugly, not so much because God will punish it as because he doth dislike it and hath forbidden it. It maketh a man also to do good, and that willingly and chearfully. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord*, saith the Psalmist: *he hath great delight in his commandments.* He who hath his heart indued with this grace will not dare to commit any sin, not to blaspheme God's name, not to profane his day, not to neglect his service, but will with care and diligence perform the duties that God requireth of him: He will *keep his Sabbaths, and reverence his Sanctuary*; he will attend upon his Ordinances, hearken to his word, receive the Sacrament, call upon his Name, seek to inform himself in God's will, and endeavour to conform himself unto it. This made Joseph, though shrewdly tempted, abstain from uncleanness. This kept the Midwives from murdering the Hebrew infants, contrary to the expresse command of the bloody Tyrant. This withheld Nehemiah from oppressing the people, when Oppression was now grown customary, and he might have pleaded precedent and prescription for it. Other *Governours before him were chargeable*

Prov. 16 6.

Prov. 8. 13.

Psa'. 112. 1.

Levit. 20. 30.

Gen. 39 9.

Exod. 1. 17.

Neh. 5 15.

*able to the people, exacting provision and money of them, and suffered also their servants to be insolent and to domineer over them: But so did not I, saith he, because of the fear of God.* Though he was higher then the people, yet he forgot not that there was One higher then he, who strictly observed his behaviour, and would call him to account for all his actions. And this held him within due compass, and made him exercise his power to the people's advantage, and not his own.

On the contrary, where this curb is wanting, men grow impudent in sinning, and commit all wickedness even with greediness. When the Apostle would shew the fountain of all impiety and iniquity amongst men, he saith, *There is no fear of God before their eyes.* This reason Abraham allegeth to Abimelech wherefore he was loth to own Sarah for his wife when he was come to Gerar, *Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wives sake.* Where the fear of God is not, men will make no bones at all of murdering a Prophet and ravishing his matrone.

From what hath been said we may know what to judge of the men of this generation. Concerning a great part thereof we may take-up the Psalmist's words, *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before their eyes.* The outrageous and unbridled sins of this age, Atheism and Libertinism, Schism and Heresie, Oaths and Blasphemies, Sacrilege and Profaneness, Sedition and Rebellion, Bloud-shed and Cruelty, Oppression and Injustice, Drunkenness

Prov. 1. 14.

1 Pet. 4. 4.

1 Pet. 4. 5.

Psal. 36. 11.

Psal. 4. 4.

Acts 24. 16.

Prov. 28. 14.

ness and Gluttony, Pride and Uncleaness, Covetousness and Uncharitableness, these notorious and horrible sins do openly shew that there is little fear of God amongst us. Those few who, making conscience of their ways, will not *cast-in their lot among* the rest, and *run into the same excess of riot*, are made objects of wonder and subjects of obloquy: The world accounteth their courses *strange*, and *speaketh evil of them*. But let all ungodly wretches know, that, if they repent not, re-form not, they shall ere long *give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead*, and feel that Power which they now do not fear. And for us, Beloved, let us labour to get this holy Fear into our inward parts; and, seeing it is an heavenly and Divine grace, let us earnestly pray with David, that God would *unite our hearts* unto him that we may *fear his Name*; that we may *stand in awe* of him, and *not sin* against him; that we may set God alwayes before us, and having still a due belief and apprehension of his presence with us, his knowledge of us, his power over us, and above all of his goodness unto us, we may *exercise ourselves to have always a conscience void of offense toward him*, and to approve not our actions alone, but also our very affections unto him. *Blessed is the man who thus feareth alwayes.*

Before I close-up this point (which shall close-up my discourse at this time) let me crave leave (though indeed my Text and my Calling give me leave) to tell Judges and Magistrates and all that are in authority, that they ought to be *such as fear God*.

This

This Qualification standeth, mee thinketh, in the Text like the Sun in the middle of the Planets, dispersing his beams all about, being the fountain of light and life; or like the Heart in the midst of the body, which is *primum vivens*, and sendeth bloud and spirits to all the membres; or like the Poise or Spring in a clock, which is *primum movens*, and setteth every wheel a-going: Thus this Grace hath influence upon all its fellows, which are still wont to sprowt from it as branches from the root. That Magistrate who truly *feareth God*, will be also *an able man* both in head and heart, *a man of truth*, and *an hater of covetousness*. 1. The Fear of the Lord will be unto him a principle both of Wisdom and Courage. It will make him first pray and labour for a competent measure of knowledge for the discharge of his duty, and then with an undaunted vigour and resolution perform it, scorning to be drawn or driven from it by the fawns or trowns of the world. For this noble Fear will banish, yea quite extinguish all base respects and carnal fears, as fear of loss, or danger, or disgrace, or imprisonment, or death it self. None of these, nor all these shall be able to deter a religious Magistrate from doing his duty. *The Lord of hosts* being his fear and his dread, he will not be afraid of a Man that shall die, and of the Son of man, which shall be made as grass; Not forgetting the Lord his Maker, he will not fear the fury of the oppressour; Fearing Him who can cast both body and soul into hell, he will not fear them who can but kill the body, no nor that neither, not so much as touch an hair of the head, without leave and power from above. He will, with

E

holy

Isa. 43. 13.

Isa. 51. 12.

---12

Matth. 10. 28.

Luke 12. 4. 5.



Psal 72.1.

holy David, despise and defie all opposition, and that upon David's account; *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.* O the excellency of godly Fear! All other Fears blind and besot a man, make him unreasonable, unjust, irreligious, ready to do any evil, so that he may escape the evil he feareth: *But the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and a good understanding have all they that do there-after.*

Psal 23.4.

Psal. 111. 10.

Prov. 23. 23.

2. Again, that Magistrate who truly feareth God cannot chuse but be also a *man of truth*, and that in respect both of belief and of life, of opinion and of practice, of speculation and of judgment. He will love the Word of God, and live accordingly; He will *buy the Truth* at any rate, and *sell* it at no rate: He will abhor all false doctrine, heresie and schism, all fanatical and fond opinions, and make use of that power which God and his Prince have given him to discountenance and suppress them. And as he will be a *man of truth* in reference to the first Table, so will he also be in reference to the second, being by his Office *custos utriusq; Tabulae*. He will be a friend to Justice, (which is especially meant here by *Truth*) and a fo to Falshood and Wrong. He will neither offer injuries himself, nor suffer injuries in others; but will *truly and indifferently administer justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of true Religion and*  
*vertue.*

vertue. He will put-on righteousness, and it shall  
 clothe him; and his judgment shall be as a robe and a  
 diadem: He will count executing of judgment a  
 greater ornament unto him then his purple and  
 scarlet, and glory no less in it then Kings do in their  
 Crowns and Sceptres. This it is for a Judge to be  
 a man of truth. A copious and necessary Theme,  
 had we time to handle it. But being loth to make  
 the Pulpit trespass upon the Tribunal, I give you  
 but a small view of it by the By, and speak of this  
 Qualification (as I shall also of the last) only as an  
 inseparable companion of the former, That the  
 Judge who feareth God will be sure to be a man of  
 truth. Considering that he sitteth in the seat of  
 God, that he doeth the work of God, that he judge-  
 eth not for man, but for God, who is with him in the  
 judgment, that he beareth the name of God and is  
 a petty God upon earth, he will not dare to walk  
 contrary to God's command and example, but will  
 follow God as a dear child, and as God is the God of  
 truth, so will he be a man of truth: He will use all  
 possible prudence and pains and patience in  
 sifting and bolting out of the truth: He will  
 hear both parties, examin witnesses, scan wri-  
 tings and evidences, weigh every information  
 and circumstance; and after that by diligent in-  
 quisition he hath found out the truth, he will  
 stoutly maintain it by pronouncing sentence accor-  
 dingly.

3. Lastly, from the Fear of God will assuredly flow  
 an Hatred of Covetousness, since these two cannot  
 possibly stand together, the Beginning of Wisdom  
 & the Root of all evil. That Judge, that Justice, hat

Job 29.14

2 Chron. 19.6.

Exod. 22.28.

Psal. 82.1,6.

Ephes. 5.1.

Deut. 32.4.

Psal. 111.10.

1 Tim. 6.10.

1 John 2.15.

1 John 4.4.

Ezek. 22.27.

Deut. 16.19.

Prov. 1.19.

Neh. 5.15.

Advocate, that Jurour, that Witness, that Informer, that person whatsoever he be, who is greedy of filthy lucre, hath no true fear of God before his eyes: He maketh Gold his God, he serveth Mammon, he loveth the World, and therefore *the love of the Father is not in him: for the Love of the world is enmity with God.* This is the bane of Courts, the corruption of Justice, the enchantment of Magistrates: It transformeth them, and maketh them quite contrary to what they should be, so that of Patroners of the oppressed themselves become the forest Oppressours, of Shepherds they become *λυκάδες βοῶντες, wolves ravening the prey, shedding blood, destroying souls, getting dishonest gain:* It maketh them neither see, nor hear, nor speak, nor act as they ought, but do all against both science and conscience: *It blindeth the eyes of the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.* An instance whereof we have in the young Judges of Beer-sheba, 1 Sam. 8. 3. who *turning aside after lucre, and taking bribes, perverted judgment,* contrary to the good example their aged father Samuel had given them. We need not look so far for an instance; for *so are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain.* And all this is through want of the Fear of God; Wherewith whosoever is indued, he will infinitely prefer the serving of God and the preserving of his own soul before the gaining of the whole world. This Grace (as hath already been noted) moved that good Governour Nehemiah to chuse rather to part with his allowance and customary provision then to seem a gripping oppressour of a necessitous people. This King Jeho-



Jehoshaphat, in that excellent Charge he giveth to his Judges, recommendeth as a sovereign *πρωτακλικόν* and Preservative against Bribery, Partiality, and all Injustice; *Wherefore now, saith he, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* None of these are with God; neither are any of these with the godly, who sincerely fear him. But if this Fear be wanting, we may come to the place of judgment, and wickedness will be there; and to the place of righteousness, and iniquity will be there: we may look for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry. This that great Fountain of Poetry, and indeed of all Learning, though they say he was blind, yet saw clearly, that Contempt of God is the source of all Injustice;

<sup>2</sup> Chron. 19. 7.

Ecc. 3. 16.

Isa. 5. 7.

Ὁς βίη ἐν ἀγῶσιν σκολιὰς κέρωνσι δέμιας,

*Iliad. π. 338.*

Ἐκ δὲ δίκης ἐλάσσει, θεῶν ὅτιν ἐκ ἀλέγωντες.

Thus he. And to the same sense speaketh that excellent Roman who so happily emulated the Greek, some say outwent him;

*Disce justitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos.* *Aen. 6. 620.*

Would to God that all Magistrates, and others who have to do in Courts of judicature, would follow the counsel of this heathen Monitour, and learn to fear God above, and to exercise and execute righteousness here below. This duty not onely the Scripture (as ye have heard) commandeth, but even natural Reason also requireth, as might further be made to appear by many other passages of sober Ethnick writers. Surely then if Christians prove guilty of the non-performance hereof, and be

Luke 13. 2.

be like the Judge in the Gospel, *which feared not God, neither regarded man*, their sin will be sorely aggravated and their condemnation exceedingly increased by their enjoyment of clearer light and greater means to have done better.

Let me therefore earnestly intreat and beseech you, Honourable, Worshipful, Beloved, that ye will fear the Lord God of heaven and earth, and order all your ways accordingly: And that to this end ye will carry still in your breasts a serious apprehension of God's Presence, his Knowledge, his Justice, his Power, and his Goodness.

Epist. 11.

1. For the first; Seneca saith truly, *Magna pars peccatorum tollitur, si peccatoris testis adfuerit*. Privacy and solitude is a great temptation to wickedness; and the presence of witnesses is oft an hindrance and prevention. In this regard, as much as in any, we may say, *It is not good for a man to be alone*, and, *Woe be to him that is so*. Therefore the Stoick well adviseth his friend Lucilius to observe the precept of Epicurus, *Sic fac omnia, tanquam spectet aliquis*; Still to phansie some grave personage, such as Cato, or Scipio, or Lelius, standing by him, and observing his carriage. Without phansying, we have really and in good earnest a far more severe *Arbiter* then Cato continually present. For we say of every place, whether sacred or profane, whether publick or private, as Jacob did of Bethel, *Surely the Lord is in this place, though we were not aware*. The Psalmist telleth us that, which way soever we bend our course, we cannot *go from God's Spirit*, nor *flee from his presence*. But though he be present everywhere, yet is he especially present

Gen 2. 18.

Eccl. 4. 10.

Epist. 25.

Gen. 28. 16.

Psal. 139. 7.

sent in his own Courts, and in yours. He *walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*; and he *standeth in the congregation of the mighty, and is with them in the judgment*. Plato saith it was a custom amongst the ancients to build their Judges Court close by the Temple of the Gods, that the neighbourhood of that sacred place might strike reverence into the Magistrate, and make him take the better heed what he did. And the Ethiopian Judges, they say, were wont still to leave their highest seats empty for the Angels to come down and sit in. They thought so great matters as the Lives and Livelihoods of Men might not be decided unless the Gods themselves were of the *Quorum*; and therefore they reserved places for them. But be ye assured, that how full soever your Hall anon be thrwacked and thronged, the God of Angels and Men will find room amongst you. He will be in every place, in every corner, on the Judge's bench, at the Lawyer's bar, in the Jurour's chamber or meeting-place. Therefore let every man stand in aw of him, and none dare to misbehave himself in so dreadful a presence.

Rev. 2. 1.

Psal. 82. 1.

2 Chron. 19. 6.

De Legib. 6.

2. But some haply may conceit, like that foolish bird, that because they see not, they are not seen, and consequently need not fear; Let such therefore, in the second place, know and consider, that God is not onely present with them, but privy to them; and though none see him, yet he seeth all thorowly:

— πᾶντ' ἐφορᾷ, καὶ πᾶντ' ἐπαρέτ.

He is acquainted with all our ways; There is not a word in our tongue, but he knoweth it altogether;

Psal. 139. 2, 3, 4.

Yea,

1 S. III. 16 7.

JOS. II. 20.  
PROV. 16. 2.  
PSAL 44 21.

Yea, he *understandeth our thoughts afar off*. He *seeth not as Man seeth*: for *Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart*. Man, whose eye can pierce no further then the outside, may easily be deceived and coufened by the fair shews that crafty companions can cloke themselves and disguise their falshood withall: But God *trieth the reins, and weigheth the spirits, and knoweth the very secrets of the heart*: Impossible therefore it will be for any to delude and mock him, or to hide his very inmost purposes and intentions from him. Oh who can choose but fear to commit sin, that considereth he standeth before such an *Ephorus* as this! It would be prodigious boldness for a man to cut a purse, much more to cut a throat, before the eye of an earthly Judge: What high and horrid presumption then is it for Christians, who profess a belief of God's Omniscience, to go about by malicious and fraudulent practices to deprive their innocent brethren of life, or liberty, or goods, or good-name? That all-seeing Eye, one would think, might suffice to restrain us not onely from acting, but even from thinking, such mischief. And so it would, were it well thought of. It would quench the sparks of sin ere they raise a flame; It would nip those cursed buds, and not suffer them to ripen; It would crush the cockatrice-eggs, that they never should be hatched into serpents. But alas! it is to be feared, few there are who set God continually before them, and therefore few there are who walk uprightly before him. This reason the Psalmist giveth more then once of the Fraud and Cruelty of the ungodly;

*They*

PSAL 10 11. 13.  
& 73 11.

They say, saith he, *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.* Let me answer and silence such men (if there be any thing of Man left in them) with the words that follow; *Understand, ye brutish among the people: and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? and he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He doth see thee, though thou thinkest he doth not, from the height of heaven, and through the dark cloud.* His eyes, saith the son of Sirach, *are ten thousand times brighter then the Sun, beholding all the ways of men, and considering the most secret parts.* He seeth, and heareth, and understandeth infinitely more then all the world, and discerneth that which none else can; that being true of him which the Delphick Devil said falsely of himself,

Psal. 94. 7.

--- 8.  
--- 9.

Job 22. (12, 13).

Eccl. 23. 19.

Οἶδα δ' ἐγὼ ψόμμε τ' αἰθρὸν, καὶ μέτρα θαλάσσης

Herdot. Clid.

καὶ καρὲ συνίημι, καὶ ἐρωτῶν ἐγὼ ἀκύν.

He counteth the Sands on the shore, and the Drops of the deep; and, which is much more, he is καρδιογράως παντῶν, and knoweth what is in man. He taketh exact notice not onely of that which cometh from thee, but of that also which is contrived within thee, of all the plots and projects that thou art forging in thy brain or breast. Since God's Eye therefore doth so narrowly watch thee, let it be thy care to set a strict watch over thyself, not over thy Tongue and Hands alone, but also over thy Heart, and suffer not evil thoughts to lodge within thee.

Acts 1. 24.

John 2. 25.

3. But again, some there are who, notwithstanding all this, bless themselves in their own  
F hearts,



## JETHRO'S Character

hearts, and hold it folly for a man to amuze and amaze his mind with the conceit of God's Omniscience, since though he seeth and knoweth never so much, he neither doth nor saith any thing ;

Luc. et. I.

*Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.*

Psal 50. 18.

--- 19.

--- 20.

--- 21.

Eccles 3. 12.

Acts 5. 5, 10.

Exod 4. 6, 7.

Psal 73. 12.

His favour is neither won with good services, nor lost with bad ; but he standeth an indifferent and unconcerned spectatour of humane actions. *They consent with thieves, and are partakers with adulterers ; They give their mouths to evil, and their tongues frame deceit ; They sit and speak against their brother, and slander their own mothers son : These things they do ; and God keepeth silence, and therefore they think that he is altogether such a one as themselves ; They take his silence for consent : And because sentence against their evil works is not executed speedily, therefore their heart is fully set in them to do evil.* They see not gross offenders laid hold on by Divine Justice *ἐκαστοῦ*, in the very act ; They see not Knights of the post, false Witnesses and forsworn Jury-men, served as Ananias and Sapphira were, struck dead with the lie in their mouths ; They see not unconscionable Lawyers struck dumb at the bar for misemploying that excellent gift of Eloquence in gilding-over causes manifestly rotten,

*— non hos quæsitum munus in usus ;*

They see not corrupt and unjust Judges suddenly plucked from the Bench below to the Bar above ; They find that by wronging and ruining of others themselves prosper in the world, and increase in riches : And hence they conclude, that, though God see their courses, he disliketh them not ; hence they embolden, and harden, and strengthen them-

themselves in their wickedness, despise the threatenings of God, and abuse *his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering*, which should lead them to repentance. Thus ease and prosperity destroy silly ones. O that these men would believe the Scriptures! Thence they might learn that God is infinite in Justice as well as in Knowledge; that *he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, but hateth all workers of iniquity, and abhorreth the bloody and deceitful man*; that he is the Judge of all the earth, and will do right; that *he will by no means clear the guilty*, but though at present he endure with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, he will in due time make himself known by executing judgment: Though he now keep silence, yet presumptuous sinners shall one day find, if in the mean while they repent not, *he will reprove them, and set all their sins in order before their eyes: Every work will he bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil*. Then impenitent wretches shall feel the patience they abused turned into fury, and the blow they feared not fall the heavier by how much it was the longer in fetching. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

4. But still perhaps some there are who love to flatter and feed themselves with vain hopes of scaping well enough at that dreadful day of doom, great men especially, such as here upon earth have had both the face and fortune to overbear right by might, to baffle Magistrates, to elude the Laws of the Land, to break all bands asunder, to cast away all cords from them, and to pass through eve-

ry obstacle with as much ease and sport as Wasps and Hornets brush through the nets of Spiders. Such fights as these the late times have presented us with more then a good many. We have seen *Folly set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place: We have seen servants on horses, and princes walking as servants on the earth: And*

Eccl 10 6.

-- 7.

*Asperius nihil est humili, cum surgit in altum.*

We have seen the very dung and dust of the earth flie in the face of Authority and Majesty it self. We have seen men well worthy to have been advanced to the gibbet, sitting gravely on the Bench, and not only trussing-up far lesser offenders then themselves, but also oftentimes sentencing honest and loyal subjects, yea, (which is the height of villany) their liege Sovereign, unto death. Certainly these bold wretches feared not the fury and force of the Almighty. But if there be any of those *δειμαῖοι*, of that brood of Titans, yet above ground, let them know that *He who sitteth in the heavens will laugh them to scorn, the Lord will have them in derision; And that what power soever they either have had, or still have, over men, they can have none at all over God, who is omnipotent, and regardeth neither the persons, nor power, nor number of his enemies; But though they be never so many, never so mighty, unless in this their day they know the things which belong unto their peace, He will in that day of his break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potters vessel. By one word of his mouth all the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God! Thy present wealth shall not be able to purchase thy pardon, nor thy*

Mal 2.4.

Luke 19.42.

Psal 2.9.

Psal 9 17.

thy present dignity to procure any exemption. Thou shalt fare no better then the meanest sinner : Nay, much worse : for, *Potentes potenter ; Mighty sinners shall be mightily tormented,* Wisd. 6. 6. Chapter worthy to be seriously perused by all great men, that they may become good as well as great. I will shut up this point with the words of the Psalmist ; *Be wise now therefore, O ye Magistrates ; be instructed, ye Judges of the earth.* Psal. 2. 10. Learn this lesson, That God's Presence cannot be avoided, his Knowledge cannot be deluded, his Justice cannot be corrupted, his Power cannot be resisted ; Learn this, and ye will be wise indeed : for then ye will *serve the Lord in fear.* ---II.

These Notes haply may seem harsh and unpleasant : But they should not do so, since they are very profitable, and may (with the consent and concurrence of God's grace) like the strokes of David's harp, serve to allay and charm the evil spirit that is in us, and to settle and compass our minds in a right tune and harmony. But though the Strings be good, I will touch them no more at present, but slip over them to another, with which I will endeavour to close sweetly.

5. In the last place, let all Magistrates, for the ingendring and increasing *the Fear of God* in their hearts, often remember and consider the Goodness of God unto them and his Favours bestowed upon them ; How he hath placed them in the noblest rank of his earthly creatures, and indued them with rational and immortal souls, capable of grace and glory ; How he hath called them to knowledge of him, to faith in him, to hopes of living



Job 29.15,16.

1 Cor. 4.7.

Psal. 116.12.

ving for ever with him ; How he hath raised them aloft, and set them above their brethren ; hath put Wisdom into their heads, and the sword into their hands ; made them Oracles of justice, Living Laws, Pillars and Props of the Common-wealth, *Eyes to the blind, Feet to the lame, Fathers to the Poor*, a Refuge to the oppressed, and a Terror to oppressours, in a word, his own Ministers and Vicegerents and Representatives upon earth. *Gods* they are all, and *Children of the Most high* : He himself stileth them so Psal. 82. 6. Such honour have all Christian Magistrates. Now let every Magistrate seriously consider this, and in stead of being proud of God's gifts, *as if he had not received them*, he will bethink and bespeak himself with the Psalmist, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me ?* and finding himself to be the Child of God in so many respects, by Creation, by Adoption, by Office and Authority, as a Man, as a Christian, as a Magistrate, he will hold himself bound as it were by a threefold cord to serve his heavenly Father with filial Fear and Reverence.

I have done with the second Qualification of Judges ; but have insisted on it so long, that the time will not now suffer me to speak, as I once intended, of those two that remain. Neither indeed will it be necessary that I should, if what hath been spoken concerning *the Fear of God* be believed and practiced as it ought, seeing those other Qualifications, as I told you, naturally flow from this, and constantly attend upon it, like handmaids upon their mistress. Those Judges who *fear God*, will



will be also *Men of truth*, and *Haters of covetousness*.  
Which that all of us, not only Magistrates, but  
Subjects, may be, the God of all grace grant  
through Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom with  
the Father and the holy Ghost be all honour and  
glory for evermore.

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**F I N I S.**

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